

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-06

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TAGS: -- SOPN, SEDU, IT
SUBJECT: ROME VISIT HEW SECRETARY JOSEPH CALIFANO

REF: ROME 8443

1. SECRETARY CALIFANO'S VISIT TO ROME WAS SUCCESSFUL FROM EVERY POINT OF VIEW. SECRETARY'S EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY WITH ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT AND WITH ITALIAN PEOPLE AND PRAISE FOR GOVERNMENT'S FIRM STAND ON MORO KIDNAPPING WELL RECEIVED IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES AND BY PRESS. THIS THEME WAS STRESSED DURING CALL ON PM ANDREOTTI, AND REPEATED IN SECRETARY'S FRIULI DINNER SPEECH AND IN PRESS AND TV INTERVIEWS. ANDREOTTI INDICATED HIS "DEEP APPRECIATION" FOR STATEMENT WHICH WAS PROMINENTLY FEATURED IN PRESS COVERAGE.

2. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAM INCLUDED: SIGNING OF EDUCATION AGREEMENT, MEETING WITH DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL (SCIENTIFIC) RESEARCH COUNCIL (CNR), DISCUSSION OF ADMINISTRATION'S DOMESTIC POLICY LED BY CALIFANO FOLLOWING DINNER AT AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE AND FRIULI SOCIETY DINNER.

3. EDUCATIONAL AGREEMENT IS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. IT SETS
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FORTH PROGRAMS THAT SHOULD LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN ITALIAN STUDIES PROGRAMS IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS AND SHOULD EVENTUALLY PERMIT DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTERPART PROGRAMS IN ITALIAN SCHOOLS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES. AT SIGNING CEREMONY, EDUCATION MINISTER PEDINI PRAISED AGREEMENT "FOR CONTRIBUTION IT MAKES TO STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN ITALY AND US." PRESS COVERAGE OF

CEREMONY WAS HEAVY (SEE BELOW).

4. AT CNR (SEE REFTTEL), THERE WAS PRODUCTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS THAT HAS ESTABLISHED BASES ON WHICH AMBASSADOR AND SCIATT CAN DEVELOP FURTHER US RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS MOST IMPORTANT ITALIAN RESEARCH INSTITUTION. SECRETARY'S RESPONSIVENESS TO REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE VOICED AT CNR AND DURING MEETING WITH HEALTH MINISTER ANSELMINI SHOULD LEAD QUICKLY TO EXPANDED ITALIAN-AMERICAN COOPERATION IN FIELD OF BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH.

5. DINNER HOSTED BY AMBASSADOR ON MAY 4 BROUGHT TOGETHER IMPRESSIVE GROUP OF ITALIANS FROM GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY, LABOR AND ACADEMIC COMMUNITY. GUESTS INCLUDED FOUR MINISTERS (ANSELMINI, PANDOLFI, PEDINI AND SCOTTI), HEADS OF TWO OF ITALY'S THREE UNION CONFEDERATIONS (MACARIO AND BENVENUTO), THREE LEADING MEMBERS OF AGNELLI FAMILY (GIANNI, UMBERTO AND SUSANNA) AND TWO UNIVERSITY RECTORS (ROME AND MILAN'S BOCCONI UNIVERSITY). AFTER DINNER, GUESTS ASSEMBLED TO PARTICIPATE IN QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION WITH SECRETARY CALIFANO ON SUBJECTS RELATING TO US DOMESTIC POLICIES AND ISSUES, PARTICULARLY THOSE WITHIN SECRETARY'S AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY. SESSION WAS LIVELY AND INSTRUCTIVE FOR ITALIAN GUESTS WHO CAME AWAY WITH BETTER APPRECIATION OF DEVELOPMENTS IN US, AWARENESS OF SIMILARITY OF PROBLEMS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND UNDERSTANDING FOR US CONCERNS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.

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6. IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING ANOTHER OCCASION TO REAFFIRM US SUPPORT FOR GOI'S FIRMNESS TOWARD MORO KIDNAPPERS, FRIULI SOCIETY DINNER ALLOWED SECRETARY (WHO READ PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT) AND AMBASSADOR TO RENEW US PLEDGE TO CONTINUE STAND BY OUR ITALIAN ALLY IN TIMES OF SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS, MESSAGE WAS WARMLY RECEIVED BY AUDIENCE WHOSE SPOKESMEN REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED DEEPEST APPRECIATION FOR MATERIAL AID AND GOOD WILL OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE IN ASSISTING RECOVERY OF FRIULI.

7. MEDIA COVERAGE OF VISIT WAS EXTENSIVE. IT FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON SECRETARY'S EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY, BUT ALSO DESCRIBED OTHER EVENTS ON PROGRAM. FOR EXAMPLE, LENGTHY ARTICLES IN IL POPOLO, AND IL TEMPO PROVIDED DETAILS ON EDUCATIONAL AGREEMENT; ALMOST ALL OTHER DAILIES, INCLUDING COMMUNIST L'UNITA', HAD AT LEAST BRIEF REPORTS ON SIGNING. IL POPOLO, IL TEMPO, COUNTRY'S SECOND MOST POPULAR DAILY LA STAMPA, AND VATICAN'S OSSERVATORE ROMANO ALSO COVERED FRIULI DINNER, USUALLY IN CONTEXT REPORTS ON SECOND ANNIVERSARY EARTHQUAKE. EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW ARRANGED FOR SECRETARY WITH LEADING DAILY, CORRIERE DELLA SERA, RESULTED IN EXCELLENT FOUR-COLUMN REPORT IN WHICH SECRETARY CALIFANO EXPRESSED PRAISE FOR ANDROTTI'S HANDLING OF MORO

CRISIS, GAVE DETAIL OF EDUCATIONAL AGRMNT ND SOON-TO-BE-SIGNED SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENT AND DEFENDED ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN POLICY. THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE TELEVISION AND RADIO COVERAGE OF VISIT, INCLUDING PRIME-TIME REPORTS ON BOTH CHANNELS OF NATIONAL TELEVISION (RAI) AND SEVERAL ROME PRIVATE TV STATIONS. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPIN-OFF FROM VISIT IS STILL TO COME, AS RAI'S SOCIALIST-ORIENTED SECOND CHANNEL IS NOW PREPARING LENGTHY DOCUMENTARY ON TODAY'S NEW GENERATION OF SUCCESSFUL ITALIAN-AMERICANS WHICH WILL BEGIN WITH SEQUENCE ON SECRETARY CALIFANO AND HIS ROME VISIT. GARDNER

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